

REMARKS

Claims 20-40 are currently pending in the application. By the amendment, independent claims 20 and 30 will have been amend to include the subject matter of dependent claims 39 and 40, respectively. Further, claims 39 and 40 will have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been entered.

Accordingly, by the present amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that the rejections have been overcome, and respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding Final Office Action and allowance of the instant application.

Amendment Proper for Entry

Applicant submits that this amendment requires no further search or consideration on the part of the Examiner since the Examiner has already indicated the allowance or allowability of the pending claims in the June 6, 2006 Final Office Action. In particular, the Examiner stated in the above mentioned Final Office Action that claims 39 and 40 were allowable if placed into independent form.

Accordingly, entry and consideration of the amendment is respectfully requested.

Acknowledgment of Allowability

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 39 and 40 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if presented in independent forms that include the features of their respective base claims.

By the instant second amendment, claim 39 has been presented in independent and allowable form and claim 40 has been presented in independent and allowable form.

Moreover, as these independent claims are allowable, Applicant submits that claims 21-29, which depend from claim 20 and claims 31-38 which depend from claim 30 are likewise allowable.

Finally, claims 39 and 40 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Drawings

As neither the Examiner nor the Patent Office Draftsperson has objected to the originally submitted drawings, Applicant understands that these drawings are acceptable.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 is Moot

1. Over COHN

Claims 20-23, 27-28, 30-33 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Cohn *et al.* (US Patent No. 6,053,929) (hereafter "COHN").

Applicant submits that, in view of the instant amendment, the rejections of claims 20-23, 27-28, 30-33 and 36 are now moot.

In particular, Applicant notes that claim 39 and 40 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and that independent claims 20 and 30 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of dependent claims 39 and 40, respectively.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested and indicate that these claims are allowable.

2. Over GRINGER

Claims 20-22, 24-26, 29-30, 34-35 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as

being anticipated by Gringer (US Patent No. 6,058,607) (hereafter "GRINGER"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicant submits that, in view of the instant amendment, the rejections of claims 20-22, 24-26, 29-30, 34-35 and 38 are now moot.

In particular, Applicant notes that claim 39 and 40 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and that independent claims 20 and 30 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of dependent claims 39 and 40, respectively.

Accordingly, withdrawals of the rejections are respectfully requested and indicate that these claims are allowable.

Application is Allowable

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that each and every pending claim of the present invention meets the requirements for patentability under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103, and respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate allowance of each and every pending claim of the present invention.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention, as recited in each of claims 20-38 which depend from an allowable base claim. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Further, any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response and

which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate. Any deficiency or overpayment should be charged or credited to Deposit Account No. 500282.

Respectfully submitted,
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